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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/718,770	11/21/2003	Charles L. Branch JR.	4002-3020/PC740.00	1451

7590 07/31/2006

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EXAMINER

PRONE, CHRISTOPHER D

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3738

DATE MAILED: 07/31/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/718,770

Applicant(s)

BRANCH, CHARLES L.

Examiner

Christopher D. Prone

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 15 May 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-60 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 23,26,27 and 50-60 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-22,24,25 and 28-49 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 5/05 2/04.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

Applicant's election of Invention 1 and species 3 in the reply filed on 5/15/06 is acknowledged. Because applicant did not distinctly and specifically point out the supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election has been treated as an election without traverse (MPEP § 818.03(a)).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) The invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-18, 21, 22, 28-35, and 37-49, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by United States Patent Application Publication 2002/0040243 A1 Attali et al.

In regards to claims 1-18, 21, 22, 28-35, 37-39, and 49, Attali discloses the same invention being a expandable spinal implant comprising a body 1 having a substantially parallelepiped configuration (shown in figures 3A 4A and 5A) and a plurality of exterior anchor ridges (shown in figure 3C), a plurality of movable members 5 defining a generally rectangular cross section (shown in figures 3A 4A and 5A) a planar inner surface tapered upward (shown in figures 3A and 9) and a retention element comprising flanges and ridges on opposite sides of movable members located at their tip (shown in

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figure 9), a plurality of apertures 10 defined by the planar surfaces, an expansion member 2, an inner chamber 9, and a fixed end 7.

In regards to claims 40-48, Attali discloses the same invention being an expandable spinal implant described further comprising an expansion member with a substantially rectangular outer cross section. The cross section would be rectangular shaped if the expansion member were cut along any of the dimension lines shown in figures 12A 13A and 14A.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 19, 20, 24, 25, and 36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being unpatentable over Attali in view of United States Patent Application Publication 2002/0045945 A1 Liu et al.

Attali discloses the invention substantially as claimed being an expandable spinal implant described above. However, Attali does not disclose that the interior cavity is coated in a bone growth substance or that the device is made of a composite polymer.

Liu teaches the use of an expandable spinal implant made of composite polymers [0054] having a bone morphogenic protein coating within its inner cavity in the

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same field of endeavor for the purpose of providing an implant that is better accepted within the body that promotes further ingrown of bone.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the composite polymers and bone morphogenic protein coating taught by Liu with expandable implant of Attali in order to provide an implant that will fuse into the spine and securely anchored.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Christopher D. Prone whose telephone number is (571) 272-6085. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday Through Fri 8:30 to 5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Corrine McDermott can be reached on (571) 272-4754. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Christopher D Prone
Examiner
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CP
CDP

C2
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SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3700